



36983005240390

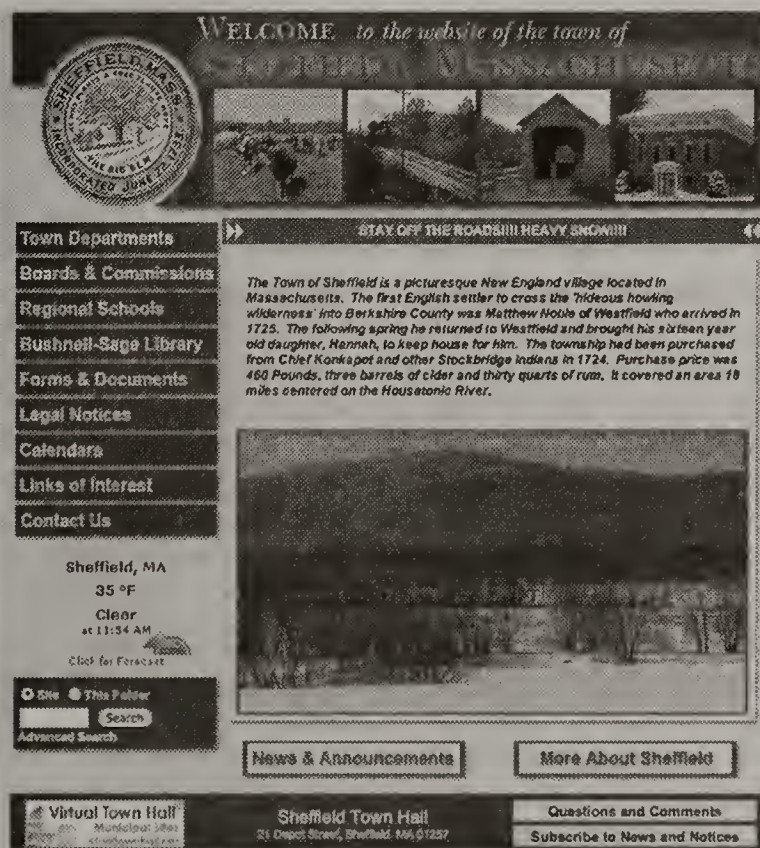


# Sheffield TIMES

Real Estate  
Price  
Trends,  
page 4

Community News for Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA SECOND GENERATION Vol.V, Issue 3 Jan./Feb. 2006

## NEW TOWN WEB SITE SET TO DEBUT BY FEBRUARY 1



The home page for [www.townofsheffield.com](http://www.townofsheffield.com) in development.

Sheffield's new website, under construction for the last few months, is scheduled to be up and running by Feb. 1. The site, developed in conjunction with Virtual Town Hall, a specialist in building small-town web sites, will provide Sheffield residents with an easy source of information about town government. It will also provide many new conveniences, ranging from a handy Sheffield weather forecast to the ability to download forms such as building permit applications. The address for the new site will be [www.townofsheffield.com](http://www.townofsheffield.com).

Town Administrator Robert Weitz, Assessor Tammy Blackwell and Town Clerk Felecie Joyce are the point people in Town Hall for organizing and implementing most of the site, and will be the ones who will implement changes moving forward. Nancy Hahn, head of the Library, is in charge of that portion of the site, and Susan Rathbun is in charge of the Police Dept.'s section.

The home page features the town seal with the Great Elm, along with photos emblematic of the town. There's a paragraph of historical information that begins, "The Town of Sheffield is a picturesque New England village located in Massachusetts. The first English settler to cross the 'hideous howling wilderness' into Berkshire County was Matthew Noble of Westfield who arrived in 1725..."

*Continued on page 3*

## POLIKOFF RD. GRAVEL PIT APPLICATION DENIED

On Nov. 7, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to reject the application for an excavation permit for a gravel pit on Polikoff Rd. in Ashley Falls because of the significant adverse impact the pit would have on the neighborhood.

The board cited several specific reasons for making the decision. It noted that the increase in heavy truck traffic would have a significant adverse effect on traffic safety in the Polikoff Rd. neighborhood. The project would also cause significant damage to the road itself, which was not designed or constructed to handle the proposed volume of fully loaded dump trucks and 18-wheel tandem trucks.

Additionally, the heavy trucks, stump grinders and other equipment that would be used in the mining operations would generate significant noise and the proposed noise control mea-

asures would be insufficient. Nor were the proposed dust control measures sufficient to control dust from the mining operation and the hauling of sand and gravel along the road.

Based upon these findings, the board voted to deny the permit because of the detrimental effects the project would have on the neighborhood and the safety of the inhabitants of Sheffield.

From comments made by the Selectmen, it was clear that this was not an easy decision for the board to make given the respect with which Bob and Rose Cronk are held in the community and the natural deference given to landowners in choosing what to do with their land. Town by-laws, however, were established to ensure that public health, safety and welfare as well as individual owners' rights are taken into consideration.

—Peter Rowntree

### In This Issue

#### Community

Property Sales in Sheffield	4
Celebration of New Ministry	6
Community Health News;	
School News; Classes at Dewey	7
Milestones	8
Church News	9
Library News	10

#### Village Green

Selectman Minutes	12
Town Clerk Profile; Selectmen Meeting	
Changes; Building Inspector	14
Town Clerk; Fire Department;	
Tax Rate	15
Planning Board; Assessor's Office	16

#### Organizations & Business

Graney Metal	18
Historical Society	19
Kiwanis News; Drury Tribute	20
Careers Class Field Trip	21
Real Estate Transfers	22
Calendar Page	23



# Town of Sheffield Ice Skating

## **Berkshire School Rink**

Sunday Evenings - December through February - 6:00pm—8:00pm  
(no skating Feb 5.)

Berkshire School is again providing free open skating hours for Sheffield and Ashley Falls residents at their indoor skating rink.

### **Free Skating Rules:**

Sheffield Town Residents only (Bring proof of residency) ; Children under 14 years of age must be accompanied by a parent; Skaters must be under control at all times. No horseplay; No hockey playing. No hockey sticks, pucks, etc.; No speed skating; Skaters should be courteous to other skaters and give a wide berth to young children and beginner skaters

### **Advertise in a hometown paper!**

The *Sheffield Times* accepts advertisements...

- From Sheffield businesses and residents
- From businesses and services outside of Sheffield that benefit Sheffield residents
- No editorial or political advertisements

Contact Tara White at 229-7754  
or

sheffielddtimes@hotmail.com for  
rates and more information.

## **Sheffield TIMES**

Community Newsletter for  
Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA

Issue Editors: Kathy Orlando &  
Andrea Scott; Library Editor: Peter  
Rowntree; Design and Layout: Cassie  
Lynch; Advertising Sales: Tara White;  
Staff: Sandy & Dale Alden, Rae East-  
man, Fred Gordon, Gillian Hettinger,  
Ellen Rowntree, Judy Schumer, Ellen  
Weiss, Barbara West, John Wightman

Published by:  
The Sheffield Association  
P.O. Box 1339  
Sheffield, MA 01257

Photo credits: John Wightman, page 6; Beth  
Bartholomew & Dave Macy, page 8; Ellen  
Rowntree, pages 14 ; SBSRD and Kathy  
Orlando page 17; Gary Schumer, page 18

### **HOW TO SUPPORT THE SHEFFIELD TIMES YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER**

#### **Submit articles, news items, photos or illustrations**

Have an idea for a story? Taken a great picture of an interesting Sheffield scene? Have a new business venture? Let us know! Send suggestions and submissions to the P.O. box or e-mail address below. News briefs can be one or two sentences, short articles between 150 and 450 words. For feature stories, please run suggestions by the editors first.

#### **Tell us about your events**

Calendar items should be directed to the attention of the Calendar Editor and include a contact name and number in case there are questions.

#### **Advertise**

We accept ads for services and products connected with Sheffield. Eighth-pages to half-pages available. Ad policy is in box below. Contact Tara White at 229-7754 or sheffielddtimes@hotmail.com for rates or more information.

#### **Support our advertisers**

Most of our advertisers are local. Tell them you read about them here.

The Sheffield Times is provided free at distribution sites throughout Sheffield. It's only partly supported by advertising. When you make a donation, you help make future issues possible and you get the Sheffield Times in the mail. See the form page 23.

Sheffield Times  
P.O. Box 1339  
Sheffield, MA 01257  
E-mail: sheffielddtimes@hotmail.com

**Mar./Apr.**  
**Deadline: Feb. 15**

### **SUBMISSION TIPS FROM VOLUNTEER TYPIST**

A contact name and phone number at the end of the article are very helpful in case there are questions. Typed submissions are best and greatly appreciated, since these can be scanned, which means that even lengthy typed articles are easy for me to turn into usable copy for editing. (For those who don't have computers or typewriters at home, there are computers at the library that anyone can use.) If a submission can't be typed, the name and number are even more important in case handwriting is hard to decipher. Print is better than script.

—Dale Alden, volunteer typist



One feature of the home page is the ability to highlight town emergencies such as hazardous snow conditions. People will also be able to sign up for "news and notices," which will automatically send e-mail with notices of public hearings or announcements.

Every page shows the current weather, thanks to a partnership with Weather Underground. Clicking on the weather icon takes you to Weather Underground's site, where more detailed forecasts are available.

The site is organized into major categories, with easy one-click navigation on every page. The categories are town departments, boards and commissions, regional schools, Bushnell-Sage Library, forms and documents, legal notices, calendars, and links of interest. Information on most pages is also available in a printer-friendly version.

The 14 town departments covered range from Animal Control Officer to Veterans Agent. Each page provides contact information and other information, which might include a description of the department's duties, answers to frequently asked questions, employment opportunities in town, directions to the transfer station, or the date of the Fire Dept.'s annual Mother's Day Breakfast. Departments might also list links such as downloadable permit forms or the web sites of relevant state agencies.

The pages for the 13 boards and commissions, from the Ashley Falls Historic District Commission to the Zoning Board of Appeals, are similarly rich with information, links, and downloadable forms. Minutes of meetings may eventually be available as well.

The library section of the web site has links to the on-line catalog. One click from the home page takes you to the Southern Berkshire Regional School District web site, itself recently redesigned.

Downloadable forms and documents range from the zoning map of Sheffield to sign-permit applications. There's a listing of recent legal notices that will alert the town to hearings to be held by the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission or Planning Board, for example. The calendar notes town meetings, holidays and events such as town skating evenings at Berkshire School, in both calendar and list form.

"Links of interest" connects quickly and simply to other Sheffield-related sites, such as that of the Historical Society, Land Trust or the Berkshire Visitor's bureau.

The site allows easy e-mailing of various contacts. It includes a "contact us" button and a "questions and comments" button that make it easy to give feedback about the site or otherwise comment to town officials. There's also a search function.

"We're very excited to have this site ready to go," says Tammy Blackwell. "This site will provide an important communication link with the townspeople. It should make work easier for citizens to access information and forms from Town Hall. Our intention is to make this a 'user friendly' site and to create easy access to public information. We look forward to some feedback so we may improve as we go."

-- Andrea Scott

The new website will include a calendar of town events



## ANALYSIS OF PROPERTY SALES IN SHEFFIELD

Every issue, the Sheffield Times publishes recent real-estate transactions in town, as supplied by Barbara West in the Assessor's Office. The lists provide a lot of data on sales of houses, sales of land, and transfers of property with little or no money changing hands. To see what kind of picture it would give of property sales in Sheffield if the data were analyzed, we entered four years' worth of transactions into a spreadsheet. (Transactions for 2005 were through Dec. 8, the latest data available.)

The transaction listings don't provide many details about the sale. We followed these rules to interpret them: If a sale had an address listed ("property at 55 S. Main St."), it was counted as a "home/business" sale. If there was no street number ("property at Cooper Hill Rd."), it was counted as a "land" sale (acreage is not part of the listing). Transfers are often noted as such, and we also included in that category transactions of less than \$1,000. For all sales, we rounded off to the nearest thousand.

Even without considering the transfers, the number of sales exceeds the number of actual properties because sometimes the same parcel changes hands more than once, sometimes on the same day.

We calculated the average price of sales for homes and for land—that is, the total value divided by the number of sales. We also calculated the median price, which is the value at which there

are an equal number of sales above and below. Medians are the number typically used in describing real-estate trends because they are less vulnerable to being skewed by a few very big or very small sales.

When the average and the median values are fairly close together, it's a sign that the data being analyzed are fairly consistent. The farther apart the two values, the less "continuous" the data are likely to be.

Here are highlights of what we found. Details for each year are in the boxes on the opposite page.

- The number of transactions per year has decreased somewhat, from 170 in 2002 to 159 and 157 in 2003 and 2004 to 149 in 2005. Not counting transfers, sales in the four years were lowest in 2004.

- The median price of a home/business in Sheffield rose from \$212,000 in 2002 to a high of \$275,000 in 2004. The median declined in 2005, to \$262,000. Nationally, the median price of a home is \$215,000.

- The largest sale recorded in the four years was \$2,250,000, for property on Galvin Farm Trail, Hulett Hill Rd. and New Marlborough. Million-dollar sales were recorded in 2002, 2004 and 2005. Three of the eight such sales were of the same property, the parcel on Boardman St. that was once owned by Douglas Trumbull and the Visionaries and now by Sheffield Arts Space.


- The largest land sale in the four years was \$835,000 in 2003, which was an Agricultural Preservation Restriction on Hewins St. and Maple Ave, a farm with more than 150 acres.

Most house sales in the four years of the analysis were for less than \$400,000. In 2005, for instance, 47 of the 64 sales were below that amount. Over the four years, sales of houses below \$200,000 have declined, from 33 in 2002 to 18 in 2005, while sales of houses above \$400,000 have increased, from 7 to 17.

Most land sales were under \$100,000. In 2005, for instance, 31 of the 41 land sales fell into this category with seven being parcels sold as part of the Hulett Hill development for \$45,000 to \$90,000. In 2005, 10 parcels sold for more than \$100,000, from \$134,000 to \$400,000.

Many of these small sales are around Berkshire Lake Estates off Route 41. In the four years analyzed, there have been more than 20 sales in that part of Sheffield, most for less than \$10,000 and some for as little as \$1,000 and \$2,000. As visible on the Town assessors maps that area was long ago divided into hundreds of very small parcels, some no more than an eighth or quarter of an acre.

*Note: This is not related to assessment valuations. Many of the sales used in this analysis are not utilized by the Assessors in their revaluation of property values which is done in accordance with specific Dept. of Revenue regulations.*



**The Enchanted Florist**  
[www.enchanted-florist.net](http://www.enchanted-florist.net)

413-229-8430

935 Rt. 7a in Ashley Falls

Barbara Morgan & Jude Kent

*B E R*

**Berkshire Estates Realty**

Rita A. Backhaus, CBR

Broker/Owner

Roger Belanger, Broker Associate

We are a full service agency.

Let us represent you in your next sale, purchase, or rental!

Experience the Difference!!

Phone 413-528-5262

Fax 413-528-6272

[www.berkshireestatesrealty.com](http://www.berkshireestatesrealty.com)



## Real-Estate Sales in Sheffield, 2002-2005

### Year: 2002

Total transactions: 170  
Home and business sales: 71  
Property sales: 39  
Transfers: 60

*Home/business sales*  
Median: \$212,000  
Average: \$266,000  
Lowest: \$5,000  
Highest: \$1,850,000

*Land sales*  
Median: \$50,000  
Average: \$76,000  
Lowest: \$3,000  
Highest: \$460,000

### Year: 2003

Total transactions: 159  
Home and business sales: 64  
Property sales: 42  
Transfers: 53

*Home/business sales*  
Median: \$253,000  
Average: \$316,000  
Lowest: \$45,000  
Highest: \$810,000

*Land sales*  
Median: \$48,000  
Average: \$129,000  
Lowest: \$4,000  
Highest: \$835,000

### Year: 2004

Total transactions: 157  
Home and business sales: 49  
Property sales: 34  
Transfers: 74

*Home/business sales*  
Median: \$275,000  
Average: \$377,000  
Lowest: \$35,000  
Highest: \$1,350,000

*Land sales*  
Median: \$85,000  
Average: \$109,000  
Lowest: \$20,000  
Highest: \$550,000

### Year: 2005\*

Total transactions: 149  
Home and business sales: 64  
Property sales: 41  
Transfers: 45

*Home/business sales*  
Median: \$262,000  
Average: \$346,000  
Lowest: \$70,000  
Highest: \$1,850,000

*Land sales*  
Median: \$50,000  
Average: \$89,000  
Lowest: \$2,000  
Highest: \$400,000

Number of home/business sales by price category  
(median category in bold)

0-\$100,000	10
\$100-150,000	10
\$151-200,000	13
\$201-250,000	9
<b>\$251-300,000</b>	<b>7</b>
\$301-350,000	6
\$351-400,000	9
\$401-500,000	3
\$501-1,000,000	2
\$1,000,000+	2

Number of home/business sales by price category  
(median category in bold)

0-\$100,000	9
\$100-150,000	6
\$151-200,000	7
\$201-250,000	10
<b>\$251-300,000</b>	<b>11</b>
\$301-350,000	7
\$351-400,000	4
\$401-500,000	1
\$501-1,000,000	9
\$1,000,000+	1

Number of home/business sales by price category  
(median category in bold)

0-\$100,000	6
\$100-150,000	3
\$151-200,000	7
\$201-250,000	4
<b>\$251-300,000</b>	<b>6</b>
\$301-350,000	5
\$351-400,000	2
\$401-500,000	5
\$501-1,000,000	8
\$1,000,000+	3

Number of home/business sales by price category  
(median category in bold)

0-\$100,000	3
\$100-150,000	5
\$151-200,000	10
\$201-250,000	12
<b>\$251-300,000</b>	<b>10</b>
\$301-350,000	4
\$351-400,000	3
\$401-500,000	6
\$501-1,000,000	9
\$1,000,000+	2

\*Through Dec. 8



## A CELEBRATION OF NEW MINISTRY FOR ANNIE RYDER AT CHRIST CHURCH

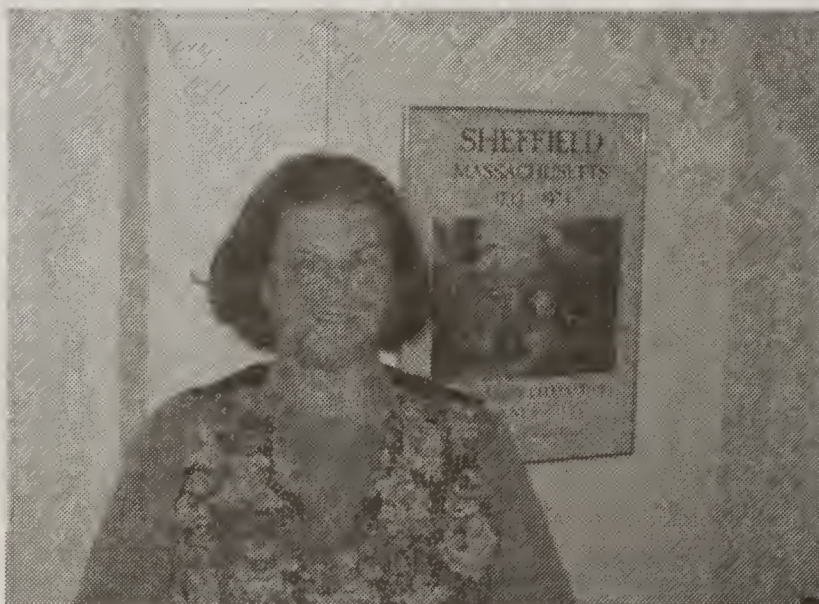
Christ Church Episcopal and the Rev. Anne Ryder both have something to celebrate. After the Rev. Susan Crampton retired in 2003, Christ Church began a search for a new rector. With the blessing of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, they called Rev. Ryder to be "Priest in Charge." This is a three-year agreement between a congregation and a priest where both "try each other out" to see if there is a fit. At the end of that time—or before—if both agree, the church may call that person to be their permanent rector.

It didn't take three years for Christ Church and Annie, as she prefers to be called, to agree it was a good match. Annie arrived on Feb. 1, 2004. Less than two years later, on Nov. 2, 2005, the church hosted a Celebration of New Ministry and she became the church's new Rector.

Before coming to Sheffield, Annie had been serving as Rector of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church in Pagosa Springs, CO. She had been happy there, but wanted to be closer to her daughter, Megan, and granddaughter, Molly, who live in Portsmouth, NH. She then interviewed with six New England dioceses before she chose Sheffield.

Some of her reasons were practical. She was looking for a community that was rural, but not isolated. She appreciated the fact that Sheffield was only 1½ hours away from the diocesan office in Springfield and 2½ hours from Manhattan. She appreciated the cultural offerings of the Berkshires. Annie likes small churches. In particular, she liked the people of Christ Church and found their physical plant very attractive. But some were deeper. A very spiritual person, Annie wanted "to listen to God and not an agenda." In short, she felt she had a calling to Christ Church.

Since coming, she has made her presence known in many quiet, spirit-filled ways. There is a "good news" quality to Annie, whether she is leading worship, playing her guitar or counseling. Clearly she cares deeply about people and her church, but her caring is rooted in her relationship with God. In June 2004, she completed a two-year course in spiritual direction in the Pacific Jubilee Program in



Annie Ryder, was officially confirmed as the new rector of Christ Church Episcopal, on November 2.

Vancouver. In the summertime, the Christ Church community worships outside once a month in the church's memorial garden. She also has instituted a Wednesday evening Eucharist.

Last summer and then again in December she hosted a service at Christ Church in the Taize tradition (interactive services including scripture, prayer and music). She had experienced Taize in France. "Bad food, bad beds, but fabulous worship," she recalls. Her intention was to provide a time and place where, with prayers and music, people could relax, and discover a deeper spirituality. She is especially grateful to Mari Enoch, Christ Church's music director, for helping to make this possible. She hopes to offer Taize services again in Lent.

Concerned about the many painful divisions of our time, one of Annie's passions is to bring reconciliation between people, and thus also between people and God. To that end the church provides free meals for the whole community once a quarter. On Jan. 20 it will offer a dinner in support of the restoration of its neighbor church, First Congregational (Old Parish). She also serves as a part-time chaplain for Hospice in South County and administers The Good Samaritan fund, which has existed for many years to assist people in need.

Annie appreciates Sheffield. She likes Sheffield's beauty and the accessibility of the Appalachian Trail. She enjoys taking her dog, Paddy, on walks to the covered

bridge. She likes to be able to walk downtown and feel she is among friends. Among her hobbies are biking in the summertime, reading, crocheting, hiking and travel. Last summer she was delighted when her church sent her to Salzburg for a week with the Berkshire Choral Festival.

It is clear that Nov. 2, 2005, was indeed a Celebration of New Ministry—not just for Christ Church, but the town of Sheffield as well.

—John G. Wightman



**From while-you-wait duplicating to web offset printing...**

Color Copies • Fax Services • Laminating  
Photocopies • Resumes • Spiral Binding

Books • Brochures • Business Cards  
Envelopes • Flyers • Letterheads • Menus  
Newspapers • Newsletters • NCR/Carbonless Forms  
Posters • Programs • Tickets • Wedding Invitations

Typesetting/Graphic Design • Mac and PC Compatible  
Digital Plate Maker • Barcoded Mailing Services

**COLOR COPIES**

413/528-2885 • Fax: 413/528-9220  
35 Bridge St., Gt. Barrington, MA 01230  
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 8:00-4:30 • Sat. 8:30-12:00



## SCHOOL NEWS

Performing Arts Department to present "Kiss Me Kate." The Performing Arts Department of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District will present "Kiss Me Kate," a grades 7-12 musical on Feb. 10, 11 and 12. With a brilliant score written by Cole Porter, the musical includes such show-stoppers as "Another Op'nin', Another Show," "Wunderbar," "So In Love," and "Brush Up your Shakespeare."

The show is being directed by Bryce R. Hill and Charles J. Coughlin, with John Sauer as the music director and Rick Blackburn, the orchestra director. Robert Law is the artistic director.

Performances on Friday and Saturday Feb. 10 and 11 will be held at 7pm, and on Sun. Feb. 12 at 2pm in the Consolati Performing Arts Center at Mount Everett Regional School in Sheffield. Tickets are \$8 for general admission and \$6 for students and senior citizens. Tickets can be reserved by calling the Performing Arts Department office at 229-8252. —Bob Law

## CLASSES AT DEWEY

A six-week session of classes on two plays that are keystones of modern drama will be sponsored by the Taconic Learning Center at Dewey Memorial Hall starting on Tues., Jan. 31. The two-hour classes begin at 2pm.

The first three classes will be moderated by Robert Russell, who will lead a discussion of Tennessee Williams' unforgettable play *Streetcar Named Desire*. The second series of three classes will begin on Feb. 21, with moderators Carol Sica and Gillian Seidl leading a discussion of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*. Class participants will be expected to read the plays before the discussions.

To register for these or other classes sponsored by the Taconic Learning Center, call 860-435-2922 or visit the website at [www.taconiclearningcenter.org](http://www.taconiclearningcenter.org). The center will gladly add you to its mailing list and send you a list of classes.

### BUY LOCAL!

Our advertisers are local businesses. Let them know you read about them in the *Sheffield Times*.

## JANUARY & FEBRUARY SCHOOL CALENDAR EVENTS

For a detailed calendar of events, meetings and sports, visit the district's web site at [www.SBRSD.org](http://www.SBRSD.org).

1/05	School Committee Meeting, Library 7pm.
1/08	SADD/Sheffield Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, High School Cafeteria 8am-12 noon.
1/19	School Committee Meeting, Library 7pm.
1/21	SADD Winter Ball, 7-11pm.
2/03	SADD Breakfast, Cafeteria, 6:45-8:00am.
2/10	Kiss Me Kate, CPAC, 7pm.
2/11	Kiss Me Kate, CPAC, 7pm.
2/12	Kiss me Kate, , CPAC, 2pm.
2/15	BTF Plays Program Performance, CPAC, 7pm.
2/17-19	Girls Basketball Tournament, High School & Chamberland Gyms, all day
2/24-25	Boys Basketball Tournmanet, High School & Chamberland Gyms, all day

## COMMUNITY HEALTH NEWS

**Lasagna dinner fundraiser.** On Tues., Jan. 10, 5-8pm, the Barrington Brewery on Route 7 in Great Barrington will host the sixth annual lasagna dinner and auction to benefit Community Health Programs. The cost for either vegetarian or meat lasagna is \$8 for adults and \$5 for children. Admission to the auction is free of charge. The Barrington Brewery will generously donate all monies collected to Community Health Programs.

Items up for auction include a signed baseball from the Boston Red Sox, tickets to area events, and gift certificates. There will be over 50 auction items, with something for everyone.

Community Health Programs is a non-profit organization serving hundreds of children and families throughout Berkshire County and neighboring New York and Connecticut. Community Health Center of the Berkshires is located on the fourth floor of Fairview Hospital with programs such as a Women's, Infant, and Children's "WIC" food and nutrition program.

For more information on the dinner, auction, or CHP, contact Mary Feuer at 528-0457

**New staff.** Community Health Programs has added two health care providers to the CHP Health Center at Fairview Hospital.

Lisa Sylvia, MD, a pediatrician, holds a BA from Boston University and graduated from Boston University Medical School in 2000. Previous to her work at Fairview, Sylvia was chief resident at Maimonides Medical Center in Brooklyn, NY.

Julie Bielmeier joins the staff as family nurse practitioner. Bielmeier graduated from the University of Miami School of Nursing with a Masters of Science in Nursing and a Family Practitioner focus.

**Playgroup.** CHP Family Network invites all families with children up to age 6 to a weekly playgroup at the Old Parish Church in Sheffield. Playgroups offer adults an opportunity to socialize while their children play in a safe, comfortable environment. The playgroup will meet on Mondays, 9:30-11:30am, except on school holidays and snow days. CHP Family Network also offers parent education, and a variety of parent/child activities at The Family Center and in other locations. The Family Center has a clothing exchange, lending library and playroom. All CHP Family Network programs are free of charge for parents and caregivers of young children. For more information Family Network programs, call The Family Center at 528-0721.

## INDOOR MARKET SAYS THANKS!

Thanks to all the patrons who made our indoor market at Dewey Memorial Hall a great success. We hope your holidays were enjoyable and that 2006 is a vintage year for you and your family and friends. We look forward to seeing you when the market reopens in the spring on March 18.



## SHEFFIELD MILESTONES

### Dana Bartholomew

Dana Bartholomew, a "favorite son" of Sheffield, descendant of a long line of Sheffieldians dating to the 17th century, died suddenly in early November at Berkshire Medical Center.

An ardent supporter of numerous activities, Dana served as an advisor to the Sheffield Association, which is the publisher of the Sheffield Times and one of the sponsors of the Sheffield in Celebration days and the 2004 Sheffield River Day. Dana could be counted on for good ideas and thoughtful advice on ways to gather support for activities that would benefit Sheffield.

His background as Selectman for three terms (he was chair for most of those years) made him a valuable contributor to Sheffield's Master Plan, including ideas on how to ensure clean water and preserve our natural beauty. To preserve one of the most beautiful vistas in Sheffield, he created the 427-acre "Bartholomew Farm Preserve" with The Nature Conservancy on Undermountain Rd. (Route 41). As president of the Sheffield Water Company, one-time manager of Sheffield Plastics and a long-standing active member in

the Kiwanis Club and boards of local banks, Dana had a unique perspective about Sheffield, its people, environment, commerce and government. His attitude toward sharing was the basis of his community spirit.

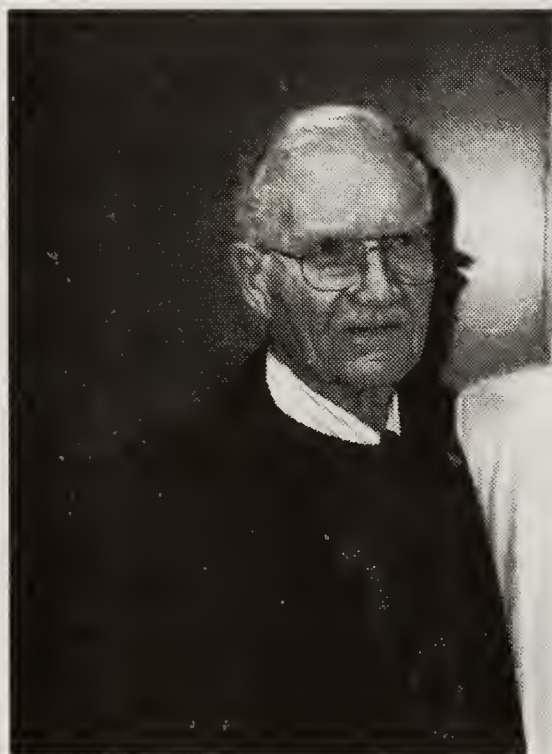
Dana Bartholomew was a generous and fun-loving person. One could see his award-winning automobile restorations on Undermountain Rd., sparkling with pride. He and his wife, Beth, marked holidays with pumpkins and other festive decor in front of their home. His friends shared countless memories of joy at his services. He was one of the morning regulars at PJ's known as the "Coffee Club."

The Sheffield Association extends sympathies to his wife and all the family. We know that his spirit will always grace our beautiful town, and he will smile at the many contributions he has made to Sheffield

—Sharon Gregory



Dana Bartholomew



Phil Macy

### Phil Macy

Phil Macy, a lifelong Sheffield resident, died in November at his home on Bow Wow Rd. He was 80.

It was a familiar sight these last few years: Phil's handsome figure, ambling through Sheffield, having a word with each of his friends as he went, catching up with the gossip at PJ's, dropping in at the Senior Center to scold us into getting a new computer—or at least a cordless phone.

In 1943, Phil enlisted in the U.S. Navy and became a flight instructor. After his discharge in 1947, he enlisted in the Air Force so he could continue to do the job he liked so well. He had attained the rank of Major by the time he was separated from the Air Force in 1985. He then took over his father's garage back in Sheffield with his wife, Ann, as bookkeeper, while they raised their two sons, David and Daniel.

Over the years Phil served Sheffield in many capacities: as Town Treasurer, member of the Planning Board, and president of the Council on Aging.

He sold Macy's Garage in 1988, after which he drove the school bus for the Massini Bus Co. part-time. He was also a Mason, a member of the Cincinnatus Lodge in Great Barrington.

In early 2003, he gave up his other activities to take care of Ann, who, having overcome other dreadful physical troubles, was being consumed by cancer. Together they determined to keep her strong enough to see her Maryland grandchild, due that spring—and she did enjoy time with the new grandson.

Phil and Ann had been married for 53 years. With her gone, Phil made an effort to join in on activities. He took a cruise, he went dancing. He accepted a position on the Advisory Council at Elder Services. A prayer opened and closed his day, and he took solace in frequent attendance at his church. Cancer claimed him too, having held off long enough to let him take care of Ann.

Together, Phil and Ann entered wholeheartedly into Sheffield life and enriched it immeasurably. They were a gallant pair and we shall miss them.

—Rae A. Eastman



# CHURCH NEWS

## Old Parish & Christ Church

### Community Dinner to Benefit Old Parish.

Old Parish Church in Sheffield is our town's most recognizable landmark as well as the home, since 1735, to the First Congregational Church. Last summer we all watched as major restoration work was done to this venerable building, including shoring up the foundation and beautifying the exterior.

The people of Christ Church Episcopal, Old Parish's neighbor and friend since 1866, are hosting a community dinner on Fri., Jan. 20, 5:30-7:30pm, at Christ Church, to celebrate our past and to raise funds to help offset the cost of the work done recently at Old Parish.

An old-fashioned and delicious dinner is planned, reminiscent of church suppers of yore, with baked ham, scalloped potatoes, vegetables, baked beans and apple crisp. There will be live music and entertainment highlighting the history of our town and of Old Parish, offered by members of Christ Church and the community. Donations of any amount will be gratefully accepted for Old Parish's Restoration.

Come and join us for a fun evening, a hearty meal, and the mingling of friends, old and new, all for a very good cause.

Christ Church Episcopal is on Route 7, just north of the Sheffield town green, on the corner of Maple Ave. There is parking behind the church just off of Maple Ave. For more information, call the church office at 229-8811.

## Sheffield Chapel

### Sharing grief.

GriefShare is a special weekly seminar and support group for people who are grieving the death of someone close to them. It's a place to be around people who understand what you are feeling. At GriefShare, you'll learn valuable information about recovering from grief and renewing your hope for the future. Thursdays, 7-9pm, at the Sheffield Chapel on Route 7 across from Berkshire GMC. For more information, call Sheffield Chapel at 528-2911 or Nancy Ongley at 860-824-1265.

## Food Program

**Cold weather brings on need.** Several new households joined us as the cold hit. We hope that other families who can use our help will also call. Contact Old Parish

Church at 229-8173 or Marcia Brolli at 229-2624.

**Santa visited.** Santa came to our families with gifts for all the children in the program. Christ Church adopted 2 families and Old Parish generously adopted the rest. The Kiwanis also deserve a special place in our thanks for their gifts of turkeys and fixings to the families in the program. Radio station WQQQ in Lakeville donated hams and canned vegetables and potatoes for each family.

**Freezer fund.** Thanks to generous friends, the freezer fund has received \$175. This has gone a long ways toward

the big chunk of the money we had to spend on a new freezer for the Food Program. You can help, too, by sending a check to "Old Parish Church" with "Food Program" on the memo line. Mail your contribution to the Sheffield Food Assistance Program, c/o Old Parish Church, Box 387, Sheffield, MA 01257.

## BUY LOCAL!

Our advertisers are local businesses. Let them know you read about them in the *Sheffield Times*.

## CHURCHES & SERVICES

### ASHLEY FALLS

#### Greenwoods Community Church (non-denominational)

355 Clayton Road (413) 229-8560; parsonage (860) 824-7442.

Sunday: 9:30am Sunday School (ages 3-adult); 10:30am Worship Service, nursery care provided; Rev. Edward M. Eastman Jr., Pastor

#### Trinity Methodist (United Methodist)

1156 Ashley Falls Road (413) 229-2712. Sunday: 9am Service. Pastor Betty LeGeyt

### GREAT BARRINGTON

#### Congregation Ahavath Shalom (reconstructionist)

North Street (413) 528-4197

Friday, 8pm & Saturday, 10am. Services are not held every week. Schedules are updated weekly on the answering machine, including special services.

#### Hevreh of Southern Berkshire

270 State Road (413) 528-6378

Friday: 7:30pm Shabbat Service; Saturday: 10am Shabbat service & Torah study.

Rabbi Deborah Zecher, Assistant Rabbi Andrew Klein

#### Trinity Lutheran

198 Main Street

(413) 528-1330. Sunday: 9am Sunday Worship. Rev. Steve Edmiston

#### Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire

Meet at the United Methodist Church, 198 Main Street (413) 528-4850;

home (413) 528-3106. Sunday: 5pm. Rev. Kathy Duhon

### SHEFFIELD

#### Christ Church (Episcopal)

180 Main Street (413) 229-8811

Sunday: 8am & 10am Holy Eucharist; 10am Sunday School & childcare; Thursday: 10am Holy Eucharist & Healing. Rev. Anne Ryder.

#### Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

Rte 7 & Kellogg Road (413) 229-8649. The public is welcome.

#### Faith Baptist

640 North Main Street (413) 229-0400 Sunday: 9:45am Sunday School; 10:45am

Worship Service; 6pm Bible Study; Wednesday: 7pm Mid-week Service; Pastor L.V. Morris.

#### Old Parish (Congregational)

125 Main Street (413) 229-8173 Sunday: 10am Worship. Interim Pastor: Frances Ruthven;

Sunday School, 10am

#### Our Lady of the Valley (Catholic)

Maple Avenue (413) 229-3028; Saturday: 4:00pm Mass; Sunday: Sheffield 7:30am, 9am

Masses; Mill River 10:30 Mass. Rev. John S. Lis

#### Sheffield Chapel (non-denominational)

1970 N. Main Street, [www.sheffieldchapel.org](http://www.sheffieldchapel.org), (413) 528-2911 Sunday: 8am &

10:45am Morning Worship; 9:30am Sunday school for all ages; Tuesdays: 7pm Group Prayer

Time; Thursdays: Grief Share and Support Group Seminar, 7am. Pastor Chet Howes



## HOURS

Tuesday-Thursday	10-5
Friday	10-8
Saturday	10-5
Sunday	2-5
Monday	Closed

## WINCHESTER SPEAKS ON 1906 S.F. QUAKE

On December 3, about 60 people attended a lively discussion led by noted author and Berkshire resident Simon Winchester at the library. The subject was his new book, *A Crack in the Edge of the World: America and the Great California Earthquake of 1906*.

Once again, Winchester has shown his particular talent for taking what many might think is an unpromising subject for a book and turning it into a fascinating best seller. His other books include *The Professor and the Madman* (about the making of the Oxford English Dictionary), *Krakatoa and The Map that Changed the World*. He studied geology at Oxford and many of his works have important geological themes.

The quake lasted for little more than a minute, measured 8.25 on the Richter scale and destroyed the center of San Francisco—490 blocks, a total of 25,000 buildings—and its electricity and water systems. Three days of fire (fed by broken gas mains) completed the job, wiping out most of the rest of the city that had been spared by the quake. More than 700 people died and over 250,000 were left homeless.

In his talk, Winchester began by praising the quick, determined and effective response of local, state and national officials—which he said put the disorganized, slow and slapdash response to last year's Katrina disaster to shame. Key local officials, including the local army commandant and the mayor, were will-

ing to exceed their authority and break the law to the extent necessary to suppress looters (by threatening to shoot them), contain the fires (by blowing up buildings to create firebreaks), organize emergency services and food and other supplies, house the homeless and otherwise do what they could to bring relief to the survivors. The state and federal governments also played an important role (with the U.S. Congress voting on relief funds at 4am).

Winchester told his audience that the San Francisco earthquake was a real tipping point in the way people reacted to natural disasters. Until then they tended to be viewed as unfathomable acts of God. But this quake attracted the interest of scientists who were determined to learn from the event. In a sense, this quake led to the birth of geophysics.

Winchester devoted much of his talk to a short but informative course in geology, geophysics and, in particular, plate tectonics. In case you did not know, plate tectonics refer to the movement and interaction of large rigid plates beneath the surface of the earth, disturbances that cause most major geologic activity, including the creation of oceans, continents, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes.

All will be glad to hear that he regards the Berkshires as a geologically stable place to live (unlike many other areas he mentioned).

After his talk and a question and answer session, Winchester autographed copies of his book for eager buyers. This was the third time that Winchester has given a book talk at the Sheffield library. They are always popular events and we hope there will be many more.

—Peter Rowntree

## NEW SECTION

The Sheffield Library has a new section, First Chapter Books. A First Chapter Book is something for readers who are done with picture books, but not ready for long chapter books. [These books can be found near the magazines in the children's section.]

My favorite books in the First Chapter Book section were the Henry and Mudge books by Cynthia Rylant. Henry and Mudge books are about a boy named Henry and his big dog named Mudge. Why I like them is because there is lots of adventure and I like adventure stories. In one book, Henry and Mudge and the Secret Crackers, Henry and Mudge find a spy kit and buy it. They find codes, Henry cracks them and they meet another boy and his dog. I won't tell you the rest because I don't want to give it away. Read it, it's good.

—Kristen Wolfe, age 8

## The Horse Barn Classics

Automobile and Truck Sales

413-229-2021 (office)  
413-292-7245 (pager)  
413-229-2028 (home)

1080 S. Undermountain Road  
Sheffield, MA 01257

## LIBRARY COMING EVENTS

Jan. 16—Annual family celebration of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday with the Sheffield Historical Society at 1pm.

Jan. 21—Booktalk by Tom Lewis on *The Hudson: a History*, published by Yale University Press in 2005. "Spanning armies and aesthetics, the versatile, fluid Lewis writes with affection for the river and its history," said Booklist. 2pm.

February 7 to 11—Photography exhibit of "Mary Lou's Barns" by Mary T. Barnum.

Three other booktalks are in the planning phase. Call 229-7004 for more information.



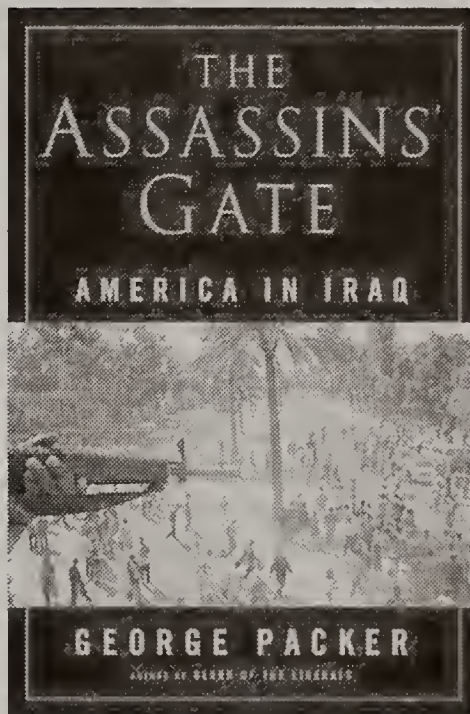
## RECOMMENDED READING

**The Assassin's Gate: America in Iraq** by George Packer. Published in September, this book—one of The New York Times' 10 "Best Books of 2005"—tells the story of the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. It describes that country's descent into turmoil and chaos: the ancient and frequently vicious rivalries among the large number of diverse ethnic, tribal, religious and other groupings in Iraq jockey or fight for power to right historic wrongs or to get revenge. The looting that devastated much of its infrastructure; the birth and rapid growth of the "insurgency;" the frittering away of whatever gratitude and sympathy the US-led coalition had earned by toppling the Saddam regime; and the resulting spread of a sense of insecurity across much of Iraq - all pose a serious threat to our ability to bring the occupation to a successful conclusion.

The author also discusses and tries to make sense of—for the most part successfully—the twists and turns of United States' policy for dealing with

these developments. And he explains some of the more baffling mysteries arising out of the Iraq venture, such as the

Interested in helping move the town's Master Plan forward? Apply today! Call 229-2825.  
(See page 16 for more information.)



real reason we invaded and the lack of any serious advance planning for post-invasion Iraq.

George Packer is a staff writer for the New Yorker and has appeared at the Sheffield Library in the past to discuss his experiences in Iraq. Following the invasion, he did four tours in Iraq on assignment for the magazine. His contacts with key decision makers and others who have played major roles—in the White House, Congress, the Departments of Defense and State, the U.S. military, the erstwhile Coalition Provisional Authority, the UN and the various elements of Iraqi society—are widespread and excellent. While long (452 pages) the book is well written and draws the reader effortlessly into the maelstrom that is today's Iraq. This is a fascinating and disturbing book, one that is well worth reading.

—Peter Rowntree

## Solutions

103 North Main St.  
Sheffield, MA  
(413) 229-8516

 **BERKSHIRE BANK**  
Trusted Solutions™

[www.berkshirebank.com](http://www.berkshirebank.com)

Member FDIC

Member DIF



SANDRA PRESTON REAL ESTATE  
Massachusetts, Connecticut & New York Properties

Our office on Route 7, in the part of Sheffield known as "The Plain," is a lovely two-and-a-half-story Early Greek Revival with five bay front and eyebrow windows set into a deep cornice under a hip roof. Heavy corner pilasters and a south funeral door are distinct features of this building which was built as a residence in ca. 1825 by Return E. Jones.

PO Box 688, Rte. 7, Sheffield, MA 01257  
(413) 229-2077 Email: [pressa@verizon.net](mailto:pressa@verizon.net)  
Sandra Preston, Broker, GRI, CRS



## BOARD OF SELECTMEN: FROM THE MEETING MINUTES

**Highlights:** Polikoff Rd. gravel excavation (see also front page), 10/3, 11/7. Senior Center site possibilities, 11/28. Community access TV fee, 11/28.

10/3—Finding that Mt. Washington Rd. from a point 665 feet west of Undermountain Rd. to the Mt. Washington town line has become abandoned and unused for ordinary travel, the Board declared that the Town of Sheffield shall no longer be bound to keep it in repair.

The Board decided to hire Tighe & Bond of Westfield to review Bob and Rose Cronk's gravel excavation permit application. [The permit was eventually not approved. See the story on page 1 and the cover story of the November/December 2005 issue for a full report on the permit process.] The Board also voted to hire Virtual Town Hall to develop and host the Town's website. [See the cover story of this issue.]

It approved a street curb cut permit for Thomas Candee to build a culvert and driveway at County Rd. and asked for proposals and bids to cart away the entire Fuller barn next to Town Hall. If no one is interested within 30 days of the of the advertisement, the board will issue a request for proposal for the demolition and removal of the barn.

Selectman Julie Hannum praised Debbie Segalla for donating an aerial picture of the center of town and said she'd like it to be framed and displayed in the Town Hall. Don Worth and Nina Weber Worth gave the board a petition signed by 49 people in their Hewins St. neighborhood expressing concern about speeding on Hewins Street and a list of traffic-calming suggestions. After some discussion with Police Chief Jim McGarry, the Board asked Chief McGarry to research and advise on this matter. The Board then went into executive session to discuss collective bargaining.

10/17—Selectman Chair Janet Stanton advised that the Housatonic Railroad Company has not replied to the Board's letter to attend a Selectmen's meeting to discuss several inquiries the board received concerning what they are doing in town. Several curb cut permits were approved

for Hulett Hill Rd., for Dawn S. Massini, Marie F. Massini and Gregg Massini.

Discussion ensued about the Berkshire School Rd. project. Selectman Hannum received several comments about the ugly guardrails at the bridge on Berkshire School Rd. Unfortunately, Mass Highway denied the town's written request to redo the bridge railings. Chairman Stanton stated that the school caution lights were inadvertently placed after the high school driveway. Town Administrator Weitz advised that Mass Highway has promised to relocate the caution lights to the proper place. Selectman Macy said that the final road-surfacing coat is about to be done, and Verizon will relocate poles.

Stanton and Weitz praised the Sheffield Highway Dept. for doing such a fine job on the roads. The department has been especially busy due to the rains.

In public comment, Jared Clayton asked how to institute a moratorium on gravel operations. The Board advised that because that would be a revision of the Zoning By-laws, there would need to be a two-thirds majority vote at a town meeting. Discussion ensued on the matter, and the board fielded several questions concerning the Berkshire School Road bridge.

10/24—The Board discussed the location visit to the Polikoff Rd. gravel pit location. Richard Kirchner of the Board of Health will also conduct a site visit and observe the monitoring well. Chairman Stanton said she believes it is important to have a soil analysis to see the history of the water levels.

Selectman Hannum said it was not until the site visit that she realized that Greg Marlow of Century Acquisitions arranged for the demonstration of trucking vehicles through Collingwood Trucking, which happens to be owned by her uncle, Jim Collingwood. Chairman Stanton asked if this would affect her ability to make a decision. Hannum stated that she believes she can remain impartial, and she will contact Town Counsel and the State Ethics Commission. Selectman Macy stated that he felt the site visit gave a good overview of the terrain. His concerns remain about the proximity to resi-

dences and the impact on the neighborhood. Chairman Stanton stated that she felt the site visit was productive. She noted homes near the proposed site and indicated that one neighbor has only an 18-foot deep well.

Chairman Stanton said she needs to review the large volume of information and expressed appreciation to those who sent written testimony.

The Board appointed Charles Rivest to the Highway Dept. as a Driver/Equipment Operator Laborer.

Town Administrator Weitz advised that Mass Highway, if granted a curb cut, will extend Minnie Golden's driveway 11 feet to the west to remedy guardrails recently installed as part of the Berkshire School Rd. project that block Jim Golden's access to his property. The Board approved the curb cut permit for 524 Berkshire School Rd., at the corner of Bears Den Rd.

Chairman Stanton reported that the Board conducted a site visit to the Barrington Stage Company building located on Elm Court to see if it would be suitable as a Senior Center. However, the Board had just received word Barrington Stage accepted an offer "too good to pass up." Stanton has spoken to Rick Segalla, who is receptive to meeting with the Board to explore the possibility of the town building a Senior Center on his property behind the library.

Selectman Hannum and Selectman Stanton reported on last Thursday night's Berkshire County Selectmen Association dinner meeting at which Richard Kirchner was honored for his 33 years of service as a selectman. People attending included former selectmen Dana Barthlomew, John James and Tom Leigh, all the way from Maine. Town Administrator Weitz reported that no contractors bid on the library stairway construction project.

Town Administrator Weitz agreed to conduct a site visit with Highway Superintendent Ron Bassett tomorrow to view a ditch that Marcel Tenenbaum of 424 Cooper Hill Rd., Ashley Falls, requested the town clean out and repair.

The Board went into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to real estate negotiations.

11/7—Rene Wood, Chair of the Plan-



ning Board, announced that the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs awarded the town a \$25,000 Growth Technical Assistance Grant [see story on page 16.]

Kathy Orlando appeared on behalf of the Sheffield Land Trust regarding the revised Sheffield Land Group conservation restriction for 53 acres of forest and wildlife habitat on Bow Wow Rd. The revision includes a newly surveyed driveway corridor. In another conservation matter, Selectman Macy moved for the town not to contribute money to the cost of the Agricultural Preservation Restriction for Bruce Howden's property on Rannapo Rd. The motion did not carry, with Selectmen Hannum and Chairman Stanton opposed. The Board voted 2-1 to contribute \$500 to this APR. The Board voted unanimously to decline the option for the town to co-hold the APR with the state.

The Board decided to invite Cable Advisory Board member Paul O'Brien to the Nov. 28 meeting to discuss Community Television for the Southern Berkshires' proposed public-access fee. Chairman Stanton reported that other towns outside the county she surveyed had a 5 percent fee.

The Board voted to deny the Cronk application to excavate gravel on Polikoff Rd. [See story on page 1.] Selectman Macy asked Town Administrator Weitz to investigate having town crews remove snow from sidewalks, work the town currently contracts out.

The Board approved a curb cut permit for Carolyn A. Golden of 524 Berkshire School Rd.

Selectman Macy announced the passing of community member and former Selectman Dana Bartholomew and called a moment of silence. The board agreed to fly the town flags at half-staff on Wednesday and Thursday in his honor.

Selectman Hannum noted that grant moneys are available to prune heritage trees (those at least 32 inches in diameter) located on town property. Chairman Stanton inquired about the misplaced flashing light for the school driveway on Berkshire School Rd. Town Administrator Weitz advised that Mass Highway is working with its contractor to have it relocated.

Rene Wood stated that based on an article in the Sheffield Times, she wanted to clarify that her letter to the Board of Selectmen commenting on the gravel permit application reflected her own views, and was independent of the Planning Board. Chairman Stanton replied that this was already

the Board's understanding.

The Board went into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to real estate negotiations.

11/28—The Board and Town Administrator Weitz interviewed Thomas Carmody for the open position of building inspector and zoning enforcement officer. [He was hired; see page 14 for his new hours.]

Paul O'Brien, the town's representative on the Cable Advisory Board, recommended that the Board increase the cable television public access fee to 5 percent. He advised that the other four towns agreed to the 5 percent fee and that the increase will help cover the cost of three staff members (necessary due to shortage of volunteers), purchase new equipment, allow for coverage of additional meetings and assist with overall improvement of the quality of the stations. Selectman Hannum noted her understanding (from Norm McCloud) that the town can receive a recording of meetings without charge. Chairman Stanton suggested that tapes and lectures be kept at the library (not permanently) for those without cable. O'Brien will check on this. He will also talk to Town Clerk Felecie Joyce to figure out how to facilitate posting meetings on the CTSB bulletin board. Chairman Stanton said that Bernard Buckholz expressed interest in the Cable Television Advisory Board Committee and asked O'Brien to contact him. The Board approved the 5 percent fee.

The Board granted permission to Tom Ackerman of 513 Polikoff Rd. to bow hunt on town forest land during the 2005 season. The Board directed Town Administrator Weitz to write a letter to Mass Highway expressing displeasure about patching holes in the sidewalk from telephone poles and the unfortunate remedy for the guardrails on the bridge.

The board agreed that it or the Board of Assessors will try to notify the Sheffield Land Trust when the town receives applications to remove land from Chapter 61, 61A & 61B current use taxation programs for agricultural, forestry or wildlife and recreation.

Town Administrator Weitz advised that Rene Wood sent a letter alerting the board to various zoning violations. Selectman Macy stated that the Board will look forward to having these issues addressed when the town has its new zoning enforcement officer.

Chairman Stanton reported that the town is considering two properties for the Senior Center. One is the property in back of the Barrington Stage property on Elm Court. The Board of Assessors had decided that it would need to be surveyed to clarify ownership before negotiations could begin. The other is the American Legion's Sheffield Post Home property. At Chairman Stanton's inquiry, George Oleen, Secretary of the American Legion, stated that it remains interested in the possibility of locating the Senior Center there. At Oleen's suggestion, the Board will send a letter requesting a meeting in January with the officers of the Sheffield Post Home and the American Legion to discuss ideas as to how the property could be utilized.

Kathy Orlando discussed and fielded questions regarding the Sheffield Land Group Conservation Restriction on Bow Wow Road. She also explained the Land Trust's rationale for selecting land for its programs. Tammy Blackwell, chair of the Board of Assessors, was present *[and though not able to say what the long-term impact on property taxes would be specifically, she estimated that conservation restriction would result in lost tax revenue on the land but confirmed that it would not be unreasonable to expect that a home on the building envelope could be expected to be at the higher end of similar homes in the area.]* Chairman Stanton stated that she would accommodate Selectman Macy's request to hold voting until the next meeting to afford him time to reflect on the information presented.

Selectman Hannum gave kudos to the library for Local Author's Day. Chairman Stanton said she would like the Board to review its meeting schedule. Selectman Hannum inquired about status of the highway crew. There is one unfilled position, and in the interim the town employs two part-time workers. It was agreed that Town Administrator Weitz will advertise for a foreman position with the possibility that person might eventually take over the Superintendent's position when he retires.

Town Administrator Weitz and Highway Superintendent Bassett will conduct site visits with George Oleen, who reported problem culverts located on Barnum, Foley and Kelsey roads.

The Board voted to go into executive session to discuss strategy with respect to real estate negotiations.



## FELECIE JOYCE, SHEFFIELD'S TOWN CLERK

Felecie Ovitt Joyce became Sheffield's town clerk 2½ years ago after a two-month period in which she served as Helen Johnston's assistant and learned the responsibilities of the job. The Town Clerk is hired by the Board of Selectmen, and the Town Administrator serves as the Clerk's liaison with the Board. Felecie applied for the job because she enjoys working with people, cares about the town and wants to give something back to the community where she was born and raised. She is married to Kevin Joyce, who has also lived his entire life in Sheffield, and they have two children, a son Ryan, 19, and a daughter Kendra, 17.

Felecie's earlier work experiences were in diverse areas that provided a broad background for her to draw from in her work with the town and public. After graduating from Mt. Everett High School and attending Berkshire Community College, she worked in an investment-counseling firm in Great Barrington. When that business closed in 1983, she accepted a job at Berkshire School, first as a receptionist and then as secretary in the Admissions Department, a position she held for five years. Then she decided to stop working to have more time with her children. Once they were both attending Undermountain Elementary School, she began to work at the school, first as a volunteer and then full time with special needs children.

The Town Clerk's Office has responsibilities in many areas including the town census, voting, vital records and licensing. The Clerk prepares the minutes of Town Meetings. In addition, all special permit applications are originally sent to this office and then forwarded on to the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, Board of Selectmen or Zoning Board of Appeals.

Preparing the town census is a major responsibility of the office. Census forms are sent out every January to all households and landlords in town. The census is the basis for determining how many Sheffield students attend the South Berkshire Regional School District and how many attend private schools or out-of-district schools through the school choice program. This determines how much tuition the town must pay each year. The town census is also used for state directories and grant applications.

## SELECTMEN MEETING CHANGES

Effective Jan. 1, the Board of Selectmen are meeting two rather than three times a month. Regular meetings are the first and third Monday of each month at 7pm. If that Monday is a holiday, the Board will meet the next day (Tuesday) at 7. The meeting schedule for the next three months is: Jan. 3 and 17, Feb. 6 and 21, March 6 and 20.



*Felecie Joyce in her office at Town Hall.*

Every 10 years, the town census becomes part of the federal census.

The Office of the Town Clerk also oversees voter registration and all town, state and national elections. Felecie reports that by next spring there may be new voting equipment and voters may be able to choose between a computer touch screen and paper ballot voting. This is still to be determined by the state.

The original Sheffield Declaration and all the town's vital records (births, marriages, deaths as far back as the 1700s) are kept in the office of the Town Clerk. These and all the minutes of town meetings and town boards are available for viewing by the public. Indexes organized by both name and year are helpful to those doing genealogy research.

In addition to overseeing work on the census, voting and vital records, Felecie's office sells dog, hunting, fishing and sporting licenses. As a notary public, Felecie is available to notarize signatures. She is also responsible for the swearing in of appointed and elected town officials.

Three other town employees work in the office with Felecie. Elsie Gilligan is the Assistant Town Clerk. Pat Sadara and Margie Consolini serve with Felecie as the three members of the Board of Registrars, the official body in charge of the town census, certification of papers and petitions and voter registration.

When she was asked why she likes her work, Felecie said that her job is very interesting. "Each day is different and unpredictable. I like the people I work with in Town Hall. Interesting challenges are presented not only by local residents and business people but by travelers who come in from many areas outside the community."

—Ellen Rowntree

## WINTER PARKING & PLOWING REMINDER

**Parking.** From November 1 through April 1, no overnight parking will be allowed on any street in Sheffield.

**Plowing.** Please remember when plowing your driveway not to plow it out into the road where it can be a safety hazard.

## BUILDING INSPECTOR

New inspector and new hours. Thomas Carmody from Sheffield is the town's new building inspector. He started Dec. 15. Effective Jan. 3, his hours will be Tuesdays 8am to noon and Thursdays 5 to 7pm. For more information, call 229-7006.



## TOWN TAX RATE DECREASES AS MOST VALUATIONS INCREASE

On Dec. 16, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue approved Sheffield's real and personal property tax rate for the current fiscal year (which ends on June 30, 2006). The new rate is \$11.40 per \$1,000 of the assessed valuation of the property being taxed. This is a decrease of \$1.34 from last year's rate of \$12.74.

The tax rate is fixed as the rate at which, when multiplied by the total assessed valuation of Sheffield's taxable property, will yield property taxes to equal the part of the town's budget not covered by other sources. Each budget is approved by the town's voters at the Annual Town Meeting held in May of the prior fiscal year.

The rate can fall because assessed valuations of most Sheffield homes have risen. The state requires Massachusetts towns to reassess their property periodically, and Sheffield's reassessment was completed last year.

At the same time, the town budget has increased. Reassessment and the budget increases mean most homeowners will see increased tax bills for the current fiscal year.

As required by state law, Sheffield bills its taxpayers for property taxes in four quarterly installments. The first two were based on last year's net tax and were due on the first day of August and November last year. The second two—based on the state-approved budget and tax rate and adjusted to take account of any deficiency or excess of the amounts of the earlier installments—will be due on the first day of February and May 2006. Tax bills for those installments were mailed in the last week of December.

Homeowners may obtain copies of their residential property cards, which set forth the new assessed valuations of their properties, from the Assessors' Office at Town Hall.

## TOWN CLERK

**2006 census.** It's that time again. The annual census forms will be going in the mail by Jan. 6. If you do not receive a form, please contact this office as soon as possible. Read the form carefully and make any needed changes, sign it and return it to this office as soon as possible.

**2006 sporting licenses.** The new hunting/sporting/fishing licenses are in, as well as primitive arms, waterfowl and archery stamps. Hunters, please keep in mind that antlerless deer permits need to be post marked by July 16..

### Sheffield Office Products

Copiers • Fax Machines • Printers  
Blue Print Machines

*Sales, service and supplies since 1985*

Phil Fabres, Prop.

413-229-2669 • 413-822-4430

## SHEFFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT FIRE LOG

—Chief Rick Boardman

### October

- 18 False alarm at Berkshire School. Alarm time, 7:20pm. In service, 8:00pm.
- 20 False alarm at 381 Sheffield-Egremont Rd. Alarm time, 12:20pm. In service, 12:28pm.
- 21 False alarm at Berkshire Bank. Alarm time, 10:42am. In service, 10:47am.
- 21 Truck and car accident. Alarm time, 10:05pm. In service, 2:45am.
- 26 Alarm at Mt. Everett High School. Alarm time, 10:30am. In service, 10:40 am.
- 27 Alarm at Berkshire School. Alarm time, 6:51pm. In service, 7:08pm.

### November

- 10 Chimney fire. Alarm time, 5:20pm. In service, 5:48pm.
- 10 Brush fire. Alarm time, 9:17pm. In service, 10:45pm.
- 16 Wires down. Alarm time, 5:49pm. In service, 6:04pm.
- 18 Smoke in basement at 238 Main St. Alarm time, 5:15am. In service, 5:52am.
- 22 False alarm at Mt. Everett High School. Alarm time, 7:05am. In service, 7:20am.
- 22 Wires down and burning. Alarm time, 3:55pm. In service, 6:17pm.

### December

- 1 Chimney fire. Alarm time, 7:15pm. In service, 8:07pm.
- 12 Mutual aid to Great Barrington Fire Dept. for structure fire. Alarm time, 12:50am. In service, 3:38am.

## FIRE DEPT.

Safety reminders from the chief. I would like remind residents of Sheffield to be careful with their wood stoves during the winter heating season. Also, be sure you're using an extension cord rated for the heater or other appliance you are running.

—Chief Rick Boardman

### NORTHEAST TECHNICAL ASSOCIATES, INC. —RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE APPRAISERS—

80 Maple Avenue, Suite A  
Great Barrington, Massachusetts 01230

Henry D. Granger, President	Certified Residential Appraiser
Kevin L. Granger, V. P.	Licensed Residential Appraiser
Christine Goldfinger, Associate	Licensed Residential Appraiser
Jessica Krupski, Associate	Licensed Residential Appraiser

TEL: 413-528-3634 FAX: 413-528-5896



**PLANNING BOARD SECRETARY WANTED**  
to take minutes at twice a month Tuesday evening meetings and help with record keeping. Excellent hourly wage. Call R. Wood: 229-2875.

## PLANNING BOARD UPDATE

The Town of Sheffield was awarded a second Smart Growth Technical Assistance Grant in November. The first grant funded a review of town zoning by-laws, identification of changes to make zoning consistent with the Master Plan and preparation of a Right to Farm by-law, which was approved by voters at the May 2005 town meeting. In addition to further work on the zoning by-laws, the new grant will support next steps in implementing Sheffield's Master Plan and improving zoning protection for Sheffield's water.

Zoning specialist Mark Bobrowski assisted the Planning Board in reviewing zoning by-laws under the first grant. Under the second, he will work with townspeople on preparation of updated zoning by-laws for voter consideration and adoption at the May 2006 town meeting.

The Planning Board is charged with implementing the Master Plan. Jeanne Armstrong, who worked with the Master Plan Steering Committee in the final months before the draft was presented to the Board of Selectmen, will assist the board

in establishing an Implementation Advisory Committee and subcommittees.

In 1991, Sheffield voters adopted the Water Supply Protection District to protect their springs and wells. The grant will allow identification of changes needed to update the zoning protection and incorporate recent water study and state recommendations. Zoning changes will be presented for voter consideration and adoption at the May town meeting. In doing this work, Sheffield will work with neighboring towns, particularly Egremont and Great Barrington, whose actions can impact Sheffield's water supply. Tom Matuszko of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission will consult on this task.

The process has begun with an initial organization meeting. If you are interested in working on any of these projects, contact Rene Wood (229-2875) or leave a note in the Planning Board's mail box in Town Hall.

—Rene Wood

## ASSESSORS OFFICE

**Veterans real property exemptions.** In 2004, the state legislature passed Chapter 116 and Chapter 325, which expands the definition of "veteran" for real-estate property exemptions by the following categories:

Member of Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force or Coast Guard who serves 180 days, even if no wartime service

Member of Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force or Coast Guard with service connected disability or death under conditions other than dishonorable, even if less than 180 days.

Full-time National Guardsmen who serve for 90 days with at least one day of wartime service.

Merchant Marines who served in World War II with honorable discharges from Army, Navy or Coast Guard.

Other eligibility requirements may apply. Please contact the Assessors Office at 229-7001 or the District Veterans Agent, Al Adams, at 528-1580.

Applications for exemption must be filed with the Assessors Office within three months of receiving the actual tax bill (the December real estate bill).



Ruth Gillette, who has worked as an assessor in Sheffield's Assessors' Office for more than 25 years, will be 80 years old on Jan. 25. Congratulations, Ruth!



**ISGOOD REALTY**



490 MAIN STREET  
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230  
BUS: (413) 528-2040  
FAX: (413) 528-6516  
RES: (413) 229-8829  
isgood@vgernet.net

ANN MORELLI SMITH  
SALES ASSOCIATE

## DE VRIES BUILDING SUPPLY INC.

21 BERKSHIRE SCHOOL ROAD SHEFFIELD, MA

- Lumber
- Hardware
- Garden Supplies
- Domestic & Livestock Feed



- Masonry
- Paint
- Insulation
- FREE DELIVERY**

Whether you're a contractor or doing the job yourself you'll find what you need at De Vries.

**413-229-8777**

**413-229-8820 FAX**



## TAX COLLECTOR

**Tax bills mailed.** The tax bills were mailed by Dec. 31. They are payable Feb. 1 and May 1, 2006. If you have any questions regarding your assessment, contact the assessor's office at 229-7001 (Mon.-Fri., 9am-1pm). Questions regarding taxes should be directed to the collector's office at 229-7008.

## TOWN PHONE NUMBERS

Assessors	229-7001
Board of Selectmen	229-2335
Building Inspector	229-7006
Council on Aging	229-7022
Fire Dept.	
non-emergency	229-7033
Highway Dept.	229-7030
Police Dept.	
non-emergency	229-8522
School District	229-8778
Town Administrator	229-7000
Tax Collector	229-7008
Town Clerk	229-8752
Transfer Station	229-7019
Treasurer	229-7007



Naturalist Tom Wessels describes how hemlock and other conifer stumps decay from the outside in, at the Sheffield Land Trust's 3rd Annual conservation property walk.

Back by popular demand!  
2nd Biennial  
Sheffield Historical Society

## Silent Auction & Tag Sale

**Saturday July 8, 2006**

Donations & Volunteers Needed

Call R. Wood: 229-2875 or  
Jim Miller: 229-8668

Donation pickup & receipts available

## GULOTTA'S GRANT

Gulotta's Mobil owners, Tony and Ed Gulotta, present Mt. Everett principal Glen DeVoti and Athletic Director Jesse Carpenter with a \$500 check from the ExxonMobil Educational Alliance program. The money will be used to help support the youth girl's basketball program.

This is the fifth consecutive year that a grant from Mobil has gone to support the girl's softball, soccer, and basketball programs. Although this is the last year of the Alliance program, Gulotta's Mobil itself will be continuing the Annual Program where it is most needed.



**Sheffield Pottery**  
The Berkshire's Best Selection of Handcrafted American Pottery



Come Visit Our Two Showrooms Featuring a  
Unique Collection of Handmade Pottery & the  
Best in Ceramic Supplies / Open 7 Days

rt 7, sheffield, ma 01257 • toll-free 1-888-spi-clay

[www.sheffield-pottery.com](http://www.sheffield-pottery.com)

Pottery by Christa Knox, Natural Elements



## GRANEY METAL DESIGNS BRINGS BLACKSMITHING TO SHEFFIELD

Under the spreading chestnut tree  
the village smithy stands;  
The smith, a mighty man is he  
with large and sinewy hands;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
are strong as iron bands.

There is no spreading chestnut tree on Route 7 where the “village smithy” is located, and unlike Longfellow’s smith, he works indoors, in a modern building, but John Graney of Graney Metal Designs is definitely Sheffield’s own blacksmith. Since he opened his shop in 1998, John has become one of the Northeast’s premier designers, fabricators and restorers of custom ornamental and architectural ironwork and hand-forged accessories. Working for custom builders, architects and private individuals in the tri-state area, he uses forged steel, bronze, aluminum and copper to make “house jewelry” for indoor and outdoor use. His pieces include stair rails, gates, sculptures, house hardware, andirons, balconies and lighting, many incorporating plant forms in their designs.

That’s not surprising, considering John’s background was actually in botany, not metal work. He graduated from college in Wisconsin with a degree in plant pathology. His ambition was to run fruit and nut orchards. But as he put it, “My first job at an apple orchard was a disaster. And at the end of the season the owner had broken equipment that he wanted me to fix—but I didn’t know how. So he sent me to welding school.” That experience was the pivotal point in John’s life. While at welding school, he came across a thin magazine called *The Anvil’s Ring*, which showed artistic and sculptural welded work. When he saw the objects pictured inside, he said to himself, “Wow! This is what I want to do!”

Since he had no iron-working experience, John apprenticed himself to 60 different shops in just one year. After that whirlwind year, in 1976 he went to work as a full-time apprentice to Wisconsin blacksmith Bob Bergman and then worked for another blacksmith in Texas. In those days almost no American college offered welding in its art department, although now many do.



*Graney Metal Design on Route 7 in Sheffield crafts steel, bronze, aluminum and copper “house jewelry” for indoor and outdoor use.*

After feeling he had mastered some competency in metalwork, he moved to Spring Green, WI, where Frank Lloyd Wright’s famed Taliesin is located. John was one of more than 200 crafters there. He began forging fireplace screens, kitchen racks, tables and other metal ware and spent six years selling at craft shows. But John felt that he needed to continue perfecting his blacksmithing techniques, so he went to Germany with the Artist Blacksmith Association and worked there as a journeyman blacksmith. Upon returning to the U.S., he became an artist in residence in Peter’s Valley, a crafters’ village in northwest New Jersey, and subsequently opened his own blacksmithing business in an abandoned freight building in Westfield, NJ. He made the decision to move to Sheffield in 1996. It took two years to convert the building he is now in into a workable forge.

His big break in our area came when he designed and executed a huge plant- and animal-patterned stair railing for a senior residence in Norwich, CT, funded by the Mohican Indians who run the Mohican Sun Casino. According to John, that two-year project “really put us on the map,” and he has been busy blacksmithing in Sheffield ever since.

His building on the east side of Route 7 has two forges, one run on coal and one on propane gas. Blacksmithing coal must be low in sulfur and other impurities. It comes from only one mine, the Pocahontas Mine in West Virginia, which has been

mining this type of coal for 100 years.

Clients come to John with an idea—sometimes simply a line drawing—and John develops the drawing so that it will look like the work of art it will eventually become. It can often take as long as four or five months for a piece to be completed and installed. But clients are willing to wait because they know that the finished product will truly be a piece of “house jewelry”—an original piece of art that will grace their home, garden, or business for a long time.

John enthusiastically added that in addition to working in his business, he also teaches his craft. He teaches at the Rudolph Steiner School and several years ago took on three women as private students in welding and fabricating. This past fall he had an industrial arts student from Monument Mountain High School.

Graney Metal Designs will be expanding soon. John says that his building isn’t large enough for him and four full-time and two part-time employees, especially when they are working very large pieces. He is planning a large addition to the rear and side of the current building, which he hopes will better enable him to take commissions for exceptional metal work.

On John Graney’s desk are copies of *The Anvils’ Ring*, now a sophisticated, glossy magazine. Today, he can make the type of artistic creations in metal that he dreamed of when he first chanced upon that publication and realized what he wanted to do.

—Judith Schumer



## SHEFFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

**What's It Night.** At January's monthly meeting, our experts are back to challenge the audience to identify some highly unusual items. Bring along that object from the closet or shelf whose identity or use you just can't seem to figure out. It's always a fun evening. You might learn a thing or two, or you just might stump the experts. A perennial favorite of members and friends. Fri., Jan. 13, 7:30pm at Dewey Memorial Hall.

**Special Event: Martin Luther King, Jr. and local heroes.** For several years the Sheffield Historical Society has worked with the Bushnell-Sage Library to present a special program for Martin Luther King Day. This year, we will enjoy readings, songs, presentations and more. Join us for an event that always lifts the spirit. Mon., Jan. 16, 1pm. Bushnell-Sage Library.

**Pittsfield civil rights pioneer.** At the February monthly meeting, Ivan Newton will speak on Rev. Harrison, an early civil rights leader, Civil War chaplain, and prominent Pittsfield

figure. A drive is underway to turn his Pittsfield home into a museum. Fri., Feb. 10, 7:30pm at Dewey Memorial Hall.

**February School Vacation Workshop.** It's in the planning stages. Call the office in January if you are interested in enrolling a youngster. These workshops fill up fast, so make a reservation early!

*The Sheffield Historical Society is located on Route 7 in the center of Sheffield. The Old Stone Store is also located on Route 7, on the Green in Sheffield. Tours of the Dan Raymond House are available by appointment during the winter and Thursday through Saturday from Memorial Day through October. The Mark Dewey Research Center is open Monday and Friday, 1:30-4pm and by appointment. For more information, contact Sheffield Historical Society, 159-161 Main Street, PO Box 747, Sheffield, MA 01257, 413-229-2694 or email [shs@sheffieldhistory.org](mailto:shs@sheffieldhistory.org).*

## BOW WOW CONSERVATION CORRIDOR EXPANDED

In December, thanks to the generosity of four neighbors and in cooperation with the town, the Sheffield Land Trust completed the 53-acre Sheffield Land Group conservation restriction off Bow Wow Road, culminating two years of work.

This conservation restriction on 53 acres of mixed upland and wetland abuts the land trust's Bow Wow Road Agricultural Preservation Restriction, Nature Reserve and Farm Housing project. It includes 2,000 feet of Willard Brook within the Schenob Brook Area of Critical Environmental Concern and is part of a large block of unfragmented forest, helping to extend a corridor of essential wildlife habitat and maintaining the rural character of the neighborhood.

The property also includes a rare find in southern New England—soils that have never been tilled. An existing home will be moved to create farm housing on another site. Four acres were excluded to allow for one new house while protecting the scenic and ecological values of the land and area.

### CARL VAN DEUSEN

ELECTRICIAN - MA LIC. #36403E  
HEATING / AIR CONDITIONING  
MA LIC. #BU024769 / CT LIC. #353948  
OVER 30 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE TRADES

ZENEX CENTRAL VACUUM SYSTEMS  
AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTOR - SALES, SERVICE,  
INSTALLATION

PHONE: 413-229-8624



Here to help make things grow.



SALISBURY BANK  
AND TRUST COMPANY

(860) 435-9801 or 1-800-222-9801  
SBT Link 1-877-SBT-1212  
[salisburybank.com](http://salisburybank.com)

Visit us in Sheffield at 73 Main Street, (413) 229-5000  
and in South Egremont at 51 Main Street, (413) 528-5100

ATMs at all offices

Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender

*silk's variety*

**Beer/Wine/Spirits  
and much more!!**



107 main street  
sheffield, ma  
413.229.8702



## KIWANIS NEWS

**Classroom grant program and pancakes.** The Sheffield Kiwanis Club has joined other Kiwanis clubs in the Pioneer Valley and the Berkshires in establishing a fund for classroom teacher grants to benefit area schools. "Not Taking Teachers for Granted" is a new program developed by Lt. Governor Vesta Browne of Division 21 in New England District of Kiwanis.

To benefit the program, the Sheffield club, with help from the Mt. Everett Key Clubbers and the students of Students Against Destructive Decisions, will host a pancake breakfast on Sun., Jan. 8, 8am to noon at the Mt. Everett High School Cafeteria. (Snow date: Sun., Jan. 15.) The price for adults is \$6; for children 12 and under, \$4.

Our plan this first year is to make the grant available to K through 6 classroom teachers. Depending on the size of the requests, we may be able to fill more than one teacher's need. Community members can support this worthy cause by attending the breakfast.

**Raffle.** Club members are busy selling \$50 chances on the Dana Bartholomew Memorial Scholarship Truck Raffle. The 6th annual raffle will honor Dana, who passed away last November (see page 8). Previous endowments were established in the names of Earle Sutphen, George

Ullrich, Myron Wartella, Rev. James Chase, and Arthur Stavisky. These annual awards pay for themselves with the money invested from the raffles. Supported by the raffle and other projects, the Sheffield Kiwanis Club awards more than \$25,000 each year to graduates of Mt. Everett and Monument Mountain High Schools and Berkshire School.

The lucky ticket stubs will be drawn in Limey's Lounge on Valentine's Night, Feb. 14, at about 8pm. The first prize is once again a new GMC Sierra 4X4 or \$15,000 in cash. The vehicle is provided by Brian Palmer and Berkshire GMC. Second prize is \$1,500; third, \$500. Only 1,000 of the \$50 tickets will be sold. All Kiwanis Club members have them, as do Limey's Restaurant, PJ's Convenience Store and Silk's Variety in Sheffield, and at Sears and Pittsfield Co-Op Bank in Great Barrington.

**Soup kitchen.** The club continues its turn at the Breaking Bread Soup Kitchen at St. Peter's Center in Great Barrington about once a month. Our crew is headed by Marge Kirchner and Dave Smith, Sr. —Richard L. Goodwin

*The Sheffield Kiwanis meets Tuesdays at 7:00pm at Limey's Restaurant.*

## LAND TRUST REMEMBERS VIRGINIA DRURY

Ten years ago, we paid homage to Roger Drury, and now we pay it to Virginia. Both had vision and generosity in abundance. Not only did they help found the Sheffield Land Trust, but they had the foresight to recognize the importance of the Schenob Brook basin in which they lived and determined to protect it 20 years ago before starting a land trust had occurred to anyone in Sheffield. Their gift of 65 acres of critical habitat to The Nature Conservancy was the cornerstone of a preserve that is now recognized as one of the world's "Last Great Places."

We are now honored to add Virginia's name to Roger's to a fund dedicated to Sheffield land preservation. The Roger and Virginia Drury Stewardship Endowment Fund will be a perpetual tribute to their shared wisdom and vision.

Virginia's stewardship was not limited to the land. Her love of nature, people and the kitchen were brought together when she joined the Outreach and Education Committee of the Land Trust in the mid 1990s. She immediately became the Food Chairwoman and everyone wanted to help her because they knew that they would be treated to a special breakfast at her house for planning the menu for an event. The table was always set with fresh muffins and homemade jam and butter. It is a tradition that she started and is carried on by her successors, Susan Rothschild and Ruth Kolbert.

We will remember forever the fruit punch that she made for every special SLT event. She would lug her heavy 20-gallon vulcanized dispenser full of "Virginia's special

tea"—our name for it, she was much too modest to call it special and put her name on it—to the Annual Meeting with great determination, and it became a highlight of the gathering.

Virginia never failed, at meetings, to tell us that she wasn't good at planning but that she could cook. No one believed that because Virginia was, in reality, one of the most organized persons in the group. Her people skills and unique use of language made her invaluable. So, hi-ho, Virginia, we miss you, but we're so happy to have the memories of your humor, your enthusiasm for life and your long friendship.

—Pat Elsbach & Kathy Orlando

### Berkshire County Properties, Inc.

48 Main Street, PO Box 277 S. Egremont, MA 01258

#### MARY ALICE WELCH

*Broker Associate*

Office: 413-528-3340

Fax: 413-528-3899

Residence 413-229-7776

E-mail: Cprop@bcn.net

Voice mail ext.15



## CAREERS CLASS AT HIGH SCHOOL EXPLORES FORESTRY AND ORCHARDS

Forester and orchardist Jim Kelly stood outside his barn surrounded by a fascinating array of tools all of which he uses in his two businesses. Braving the chilly wind were students from Curtis VonRuden's careers class at Mt. Everett Regional High School. They hesitantly looked at the unfamiliar tools as Jim described his years of schooling leading to this career and his days as a child spent on the surrounding land. Woodside Orchards on County Road is one of the farms which the Sheffield Land Trust has helped to preserve through an Agricultural Preservation Restriction.

Although the orchard's apples, pears, and peaches are not ready to pick until late summer or fall, it's year-round work to keep the trees healthy and bearing. The students learned how much science a farmer needs to know to care for crops. Winter pruning requires knowledge of tree development, sap circulation, fruiting twigs and dormant insect life. Spring demands the ability to recognize and predict hatching of predatory insects and their life cycles. That must be balanced with beneficial insects and spraying at exactly the right time to thwart damage but not disturb the orchard's natural cycle of life.

Honeybees and other pollinators are important to an orchard, and an orchardist must make sure that the trees get pollinated at the correct time of flowering. Depending on the weather this might be only a few days, but they are vital to the success of the crop. Beginning in late summer the fruits must be carefully harvested without disturbing the fruiting tip for next year's flower. Because apples, pears, and peaches are very easily bruised the picker uses a special picking bucket with a cloth flap bottom which is lowered into the storage crate and gently released so that the fruit falls only a couple of inches. The specially designed picking ladders soar upward with a tapered top, looking like huge skyscrapers in perspective. Despite his best efforts, Jim's harvest is small this year due to freak weather events last year at critical growth times that destroyed a large part of the trees' fruiting potential. As the students moved out to use some of the tools Jim had shown them, they were treated to a small tree laden with delicious, rusty brown Bosc pears. They carefully broke the pears from the tree, without taking the stem for next year's fruit, and munched happily as they began their "study" of forestry.

First, tree identification. The students learned how to distinguish between similar looking saplings by stripping a twig to compare the smell. Two tiny indistinguishable twigs emitted distinctly different scents, one like rootbeer, the other like almond. The students looked at the smooth and toothed edges of leaves, their grouping on the leaf stem, the growth of stems on the branches, and the location of branches on the trunk. They compared bark types, took core samples of ring growth, and saw the differences in cell structure. They observed the effects of location on the development of a tree.

The challenge began when everyone broke into "forestry teams" to measure heights and diameters of trees and to plot their harvesting potential. These calculations were done with an interesting array of devices which allow a forester to accurately determine the height of a giant tree using geometric principles, measure the girth of a tree without touching it, and determine viable growth placement using a prism. At first the teams' measurements varied widely, but practice quickly made

them more proficient. The students learned recording techniques, including a bit of legal advice. "Never erase a figure, circle it and then record the correct one so that no one can say you tried to cheat them by changing figures," directed Jim.

The two-hour visit passed quickly as the students got an overview of how complex one's knowledge has to be to pursue careers in forestry or orchard management. Before they returned to the van Jim's wife, Barbara, invited everyone to the warmth of the fireplace and some hot cider, a delicious product from the orchard.

Field trips like this give the students an exposure to the types of skills they might develop and a preliminary overview of the type of work they could do at sites involved in the Agricultural Internship program at Mt. Everett, co-sponsored by the Sheffield Land Trust and Berkshire Grown. Internships are open to students in their junior and senior year.

—Ann Hanchett



Students get a hands-on lesson in tree identification, measurement and inventory from local forester and orchardist, Jim Kelly on his conserved farm, as part of the Agricultural Internship and Education Program at Mt. Everett Regional High School, co-sponsored by the Sheffield Land Trust and Berkshire Grown.

### SHEFFIELD WATER CO., INC.

A Privately Owned Public Utility  
Serving Sheffield Since 1895

#### Pure Water Without Purification

1080 S. Undermountain Rd.  
PO Box 295  
Sheffield, MA 01257  
413-229-2777



## REAL ESTATE TRANSFERS

### October

- 7 Russell A. Coon to Steven K. Winton, property at 200 East Rd., \$290,000.
- 19 Barry R. & Jean Chapin Emberlin to Christopher & Andrea M. Nye, property at Rote Hill Rd., \$14,000.
- 19 David A. Rood & Robert J. Beham, to Country Log Homes, Inc., property at 77 Clayton Rd., \$575,000.
- 21 David E. Herrick Jr. to Race Mountain Tree Services, Inc., property at Berkshire School Rd., \$310,000.
- 25 Johan A. Pearson (estate of) to Del S. Rogers & Susan A. Donaghey, property at 200 East Stahl Rd., \$197,000.
- 25 David A. Rood & Robert J. Beham to Pine Grove Properties, LLC, property at 53 Clayton Rd., transfer.
- 25 David A. Rood & Robert J. Beham to JGGDAR Legacy, LLC, property at 75 Clayton Rd., transfer.

### November

- 4 Robert Halper to Deann S. Halper, property at 848 Silver St., transfer.
- 4 Ken & Norma Zippin Marineau to Clifford F. Moger & Barry A. Miske, property at 946 Silver St., \$625,000.
- 4 Wells Fargo Bank to Baldwin Hill Realty, property at 1055 Ashley Falls Rd., \$70,000.
- 14 Wilson A. Britten to Maria & Todd N. Clay, property at Alder Place, \$800.

- 14 Harry E. Conklin, Trustee, to Barry R. & Marjorie Shapiro, property at Hickey Hill Rd. (Sheffield & New Marlborough), \$310,000.
- 16 Louis J. Fox to Christopher O. & Gwendolyn Grace, property at 178 Boardman St., \$850,000.
- 17 Todd S. & Shannon L. Vernali to Edward J. & Carol Ustico, property at Polikoff Rd., \$75,000.
- 17 Helen Bizalion to Jean-Francois & Helen Bizalion, property at 319 Miller Ave., transfer.
- 17 Tammy Hewins Blackwell to Walter D. Hewins III, property at Alum Hill Rd., \$10.
- 22 Donna L. & Stephen W. Malin Jr. to Donna L. Malin, property at 390 Maple Ave., transfer.
- 22 Bernard W. & Laura A. Gordon to Frank W. & Rhonda Cushwa, property at Beech St., \$2,000.

### December

- 1 Julie & Brian Machowski to Timothy Hewins, property at 401 Hulett Hill Rd., \$230,000.
- 1 Hulett Hill Rd., LLC to Melissa A. & James R. Noe Jr., property at Hulett Hill Rd., \$60,000.
- 2 Linda A. Wartella to Robert M. Pasqualina, property at 225 East Main St., \$325,000.
- 8 Elizabeth G. Petersen to Tamer P. & Rick H. Schragger, property at Silver St., transfer.

## **SOUTHMAIN CLOTHING OUTLET**

**81 MAIN ST. SHEFFIELD  
413-229-8887**

**NEW Designer Clothing  
for Women & Children  
at Extremely Low Prices  
New Arrivals Weekly!**

**GAP, OLD NAVY, J.CREW, DKNY, CK,  
A&F, XOYO, AE, POLO, & TONS MORE!**

**[www.SouthMainClothingOutlet.com](http://www.SouthMainClothingOutlet.com)**

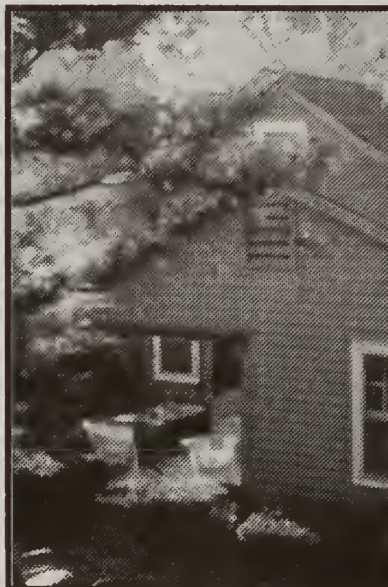
## **Neighborgoods local creations**

105 Main Street, Sheffield, MA (413) 229-5941

IT'S A STORE, IT'S A GALLERY, IT'S A WAY TO  
SUPPORT LOCAL ART, MUSIC, CRAFTS ALL UN-  
DER ONE ROOF.

COME SEE WHAT YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE UP TO!

Hours: Friday 12-7, Saturday  
10-4



## *Orchard Shade Bed & Breakfast*

*999 Hewins Street  
Sheffield, MA 01257*

*413-229-8463  
[www.orchardshade.com](http://www.orchardshade.com)*



**ALFORD FARM REALTY, INC.**  
248 East Road, Alford, MA 01266

**Joel Weiss**  
Sales Associate

413-528-4201~Fax 413-528-5629  
Residence 413-229-8061~Fax 413-229-8078  
Email [pw213@worldnet.att.net](mailto:pw213@worldnet.att.net)



# Calendar Page

## January

- 5 SBSRD School Committee Meeting, 7pm, page 7
- 6 Town Census forms mailed
- 8 SADD/Kiwanis Pancake breakfast, 8am-Noon, Mt. Everett High School cafeteria, page 7
- 10 6th Annual Lasagna Dinner benefit for CHP, 5-8pm, page 7
- 13 Sheffield Historical Society monthly meeting, 7:30pm, Dewey Hall, page 19
- 16 **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- 16 Annual family celebration of MLK Jr. with SHS, 1pm, Bushnell-Sage Library, page 10
- 19 SBSRD School Committee Meeting, 7pm
- 20 Old Parish Church restoration support dinner, 5:30-7:30pm, Christ Church, page 6
- 21 Booktalk by Tom Lewis, 2pm, Bushnell-Sage Library, page 10
- 21 SADD Winter Ball, 7-11pm, page 7
- 31 Classes begin at Dewey Hall, 2pm, page 7

## February

- 1 Town Web Site debuts, page 1
- 2 **Groundhog Day**
- 3 SADD Breakfast, 6:45-8am, page 7
- 7-11 Photography exhibit of Mary Lou's Barns, Bushnell-Sage Library, page 10
- 10 Sheffield Historical Society Civil Rights talk, 7:30pm, Dewey Hall, page 19
- 10-12 "Kiss Me Kate," times vary, Consolati Performing Arts Center, page 7
- 12 **Lincoln's Birthday**
- 14 **Valentine's Day**
- 15 Advertising deadline, Sheffield Times
- 17-19 Girls Basketball Tournament, SBSRD
- 20 **Presidents' Day**
- 22 **Washington's Birthday**
- 24-25 Boys Basketball Tournament, SBSRD

## ONGOING CALENDAR ITEMS

(Meetings or events that occur on a less than weekly basis are noted by number - i.e. "1<sup>st</sup>", "3<sup>rd</sup>" indicates meetings the first and third times that day occurs in the month. \* indicates appointment needed.

### Mondays:

Food Assistance Program, Old Parish Church, 9-10:30am  
 CHP Parent/Child playgroup, Old Parish Church, 9:30-11:30am  
 Board of Selectmen, Town Hall, 7pm, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> (next day if holiday)  
 Board of Health, Town Hall, 7pm, 2<sup>nd</sup>

### Tuesdays:

Children's Story Hour, Library, 10am  
 Building Inspector, Town Hall, 8am -- Noon  
 Ashley Falls Historic District Commission, Town Hall, 6:30pm, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 National Alliance for the Mentally Ill Support Group, Fairview Hospital Library, 6:30pm, 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Planning Board, Town Hall, 7:30pm, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> (except November)  
 Industrial Development Commission, Town Hall, 7:30pm, last  
 Kiwanis Club, Limey's Restaurant, 6:30pm  
 Physical Fitness, Dewey Hall/Senior Ctr., 9am  
 Council on Aging, Dewey Hall/Senior Ctr., 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Wednesdays:

Knitting Group, Dewey Hall/Senior Ctr, 1-2:30pm

### Thursdays:

Parent-Child Playgroup, Greenwoods Community Church, 9:30-11:30  
 Building Inspector, Town Hall, 5 - 7pm  
 \*Blood Pressure Clinic, Dewey Hall/Senior Center, 9am-12pm, 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 \*Hearing Testing available, Senior Center, 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Conservation Commission, Town Hall, 7pm, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>

### Fridays:

Senior Center at Dewey Hall closed.  
 Farmer's Market, Old Parish Parking Lot, 4-7 (May - October)

### Saturdays:

Saturday Market, Dewey Memorial Hall, 9:30am-1pm (October -December)  
 Marketplace, American Legion Hall, 10am-3pm (Spring - Fall)  
 Contra Dancing, Sheffield Grange, Rte 7, 8:30pm, 4<sup>th</sup>

### Sundays:

Men's Group, Old Parish, 7:45am, 2<sup>nd</sup>

## SENIOR CENTER CALENDAR

### January

- 16 Martin Luther King Day - CLOSED
- 17 Foot clinic (\$25), 9-11am

### February

- 20 Presidents' Day - CLOSED

## PLEASE SUPPORT THE SHEFFIELD TIMES!

**I want to support the Sheffield Times!** Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \_\_\_\_\_, made payable to the Sheffield Association, PO Box 1339, Sheffield, MA 01257

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

(as you would like it to appear in acknowledgments)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

(where you would like the Sheffield Times sent)

☐ I'd like my contribution to remain anonymous

☐ I'd like to get more involved with the Sheffield Times

☐ I am particularly interested in or have experience with \_\_\_\_\_

The Sheffield Times is provided free of charge at public distribution sites throughout Sheffield and Ashley Falls. Everyone who makes a donation will receive a copy by mail, so please note on this form if you do not want it sent to you and we won't add to your recycling pile! Donations are tax-deductible through a partnership with Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.



## THANK YOU!

The *Sheffield Times* relies on generous contribution from the community in addition to advertising to keep this free newsletter going and donations are tax-deductible (see the coupon on page 23).

And the *Sheffield Times* extends its thanks to the following recent supporters (if we missed anyone in this issue we'll get you in the next!) :

Place  
Stamp  
Here

John and Emily Alexander  
Karin and Allen Altman  
Betty and Fred Bangs  
Betty Batacchi  
Barbara and Malcolm Bayliss  
Blanche and Bill Bennett  
Ann Marie and Jonathan Berger  
Berkshire Bank Foundation  
Berkshire GMC, Inc.  
Julie Berriault and Tony Sheldon  
Robin Berthet Construction  
Marcia Brolli  
Joan Brooks  
William Browne  
Carlson Heating and Air Conditioning  
Aiden Cassidy and Charles Teti  
Neal B. Chamberlain  
Carol and Paul Collins  
Anthony and Marjorie Consolini  
Dick Coon Construction, LLC  
Kevin M. Curtis  
Jean E. Curtiss  
Susan and Paul Detjens  
Devries Building Supply, Inc.  
Domaney's Liquors, Inc.  
Betsy and Michael Ebenstein  
Nancy B. Emery  
Inez Flinn  
Elaine Friedman and Peter Hegeman  
Benno Friedman  
Marcia and Bruce Fowle  
Natalie and Maree Funk  
John and Frances Gattuso  
Bernard and Claude Ghitman

Anthony and Sarah Han Giunta  
William Grief and Leonard Graziano  
Joan Griswold  
Dorothy Haller  
Monte and Tema Greenleaf Harnik  
Claire K. Height  
Ben Hillman and Amy Rudnick  
Joseph C. and Susan A. Hurlburt  
Art and Anne Hyatt  
Mr. Charles H. Joch, Jr  
Martin and Lil Keane  
Barbara and James Kelly  
Edward Knapp  
Thaddeus B. and Maria G. Kubis  
Marc Lavietes and Rose Rosal  
Dr. and Mrs. George M. Lazarus  
Tom and Susanna Leigh  
Ida and Ronald Leonard  
John and Carolyn Longdyke  
Elise B. Lufkin  
Susan Lushing  
Steve and Anita Macchi  
Judy and Dick Magenis  
Phoebe and Richard McBee  
Betty and Charlie McNamara  
Rusty and Veta Mott  
C. Twiggs Myers  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Newmark  
North Star Rare Books  
Rich and Laraine Novak  
Christopher Nye  
Elisabeth H. O'Connor  
Ole T.J's Antique Barn  
Painted Porch Antiques

The Papachristou Family  
Laurie Paul  
Sandra Preston Real Estate  
Peter and Aurora Pshenishny  
Alfred M. and Doris Richardson  
Susan Rothschild and Don Freedman  
Kate and George W. Rowe  
Peter and Ellen Rowntree  
Hilary Russell  
Mary and Bob Safian  
Ken and Becky Schopp  
Josie Sentner  
Barbara and James Shiminski  
Mr. & Mrs. Proctor Smith, III  
Appy and John Stookey  
Storrie-McCain  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert M. Thomas, Jr.  
Peter and Doris Traub  
Jan and Denny Tresp  
Tony and Carolyn Ullrich  
Lois Van Cleef  
Joyce Vandermark and Alan Zablonksi  
Merle and Karen Varney  
Loet and Edith Velmans  
Ward's Nursery, Inc.  
Jane Warner  
Mary Alice and Jim Welch  
Barbara and David West  
Mrs. Elsie D. West  
Thomas and Joan Wiehl  
Marilyn and John Wightman  
Joe Wilkinson and Sons Excavating, Inc.  
June and James Wolfe  
Ron and Veronica Yapple

## Sheffield TIMES

Community Newsletter for  
Sheffield & Ashley Falls, MA  
P.O. Box 1339  
Sheffield, MA 01257  
sheffielddtimes@hotmail.com